



MEDIA RELEASE

Tagger Identified, Cited for Possession of Vandalism Tools

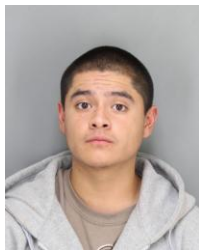
SANTA BARBARA, CA – July 30, 2012

On July 25, 2012, at 2:47 p.m., SBPD Officer Steve Robles was on patrol and stopped a white Ford Escort on 1000 Fairway Drive after a citizen reported that the vehicle was being driven recklessly; crossing over double yellow lines and failing to stop for a stop sign.

Officer Robles contacted the driver, Jerry Marrufo of Santa Barbara, and his two companions. Marrufo, who just turned 18-years of age in June, was an unlicensed driver. Marrufo was in possession of several spray paint nozzles, 3 cans of spray paint, a permanent marker, and 28 "slap tags" that had a tagging moniker written on them. Slap tagging is a popular form of vandalism where taggers write their monikers on labels in advance and then quickly and easily adhere them to objects in the community without getting caught. Postal Service labels are especially popular for this activity because they are durable and difficult to remove. Contained within Marrufo's cell phone were numerous photos of graffiti tagging at unknown locations.

Marrufo's vehicle was impounded and he was taken to the Santa Barbara Police Department. At SBPD Officer Gary Siegel assisted with the investigation. Officer Siegel, an expert in graffiti vandalism investigations, obtained a search warrant for Marrufo's residence at 728 Cook Avenue, where he resides with his mother. At 8:30 p.m. Marrufo was taken home by Officer Siegel who, with other officers, contacted his mother and searched his bedroom. Inside Marrufo's bedroom was additional evidence related to his tagging moniker along with 208 spray paint nozzles, 22 permanent markers, a can of spray paint, and 7 cell phones.

Marrufo was cited for the misdemeanors of being an unlicensed driver and for possession of vandalism tools. Attempts to identify the locations of the graffiti pictured on Marrufo's cell phone are underway.



Marrufo, Jerry

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